

# INSPECTION REPORT

**NEWTOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Newtown Road, Carlisle**

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112218

Head teacher: Mrs J Blacklock

Reporting inspector: Mrs M Lewis  
22787

Dates of inspection: 15 - 18 October 2001

Inspection number: 195687  
Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Newtown Road Carlisle Cumbria
Postcode:	CA2 7LW
Telephone number:	01228 607551
Fax number:	01228 607552
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Sue Wynn
Date of previous inspection:	March 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22787	M Lewis	Registered inspector	Science	What sort of a school is it?
			Art and design	The school's results and pupils' achievements
			Religious education	How well are pupils taught?
			Special educational needs	How well is the school led and managed?
			English as an additional language	
1168	K Lee	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
				How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
15474	J Fairclough	Team inspector	English	How good are the curricular opportunities offered to pupils?
			Information and communication technology	
			Design and technology	
			Physical education	
			Equal opportunities	
27477	J Mitchell	Team inspector	The foundation stage	
			Mathematics	
			Geography	
			History	
			Music	

The inspection contractor was:

Eclipse (Education) Limited  
14 Enterprise House  
Kingsway  
Team Valley  
Gateshead  
NE11 0SR.

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33 Kingsway  
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WC2B 6SE.

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>5</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>10</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>25</b>

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Newtown Primary School is a smaller than average primary school with 144 pupils aged between 3 and 11. This includes forty-one children who attend the nursery on a part-time basis and 14 children in the reception class. Pupils are almost all from white, English speaking, families. The school faces several difficulties. It serves a mixed area but is predominately one of social disadvantage with a declining population. The number of pupils in the school is falling due to an ongoing demolition and regeneration programme by the local council on the estate from which the school draws most of its pupils. As a result, the school has a much higher than average amount of mobility amongst its pupils. Because it is highly regarded by parents for the integrated provision it provides, some parents choose to send their children from further away and many pupils are admitted to the school towards the end of the juniors. Over 56 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals. This is well above the national average for primary schools. Sixty-seven pupils (65 per cent) are registered as having special educational needs, which is very high. Nine (8.7 per cent) have Statements of Special Educational Needs. This is well above the national average. Children in the nursery have a wide range of abilities for their age but more than a half transfer to reception classes in schools nearer their homes without nursery classes. Many of those who go into the school's reception class have attainment that is well below the average for their age.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

The school provides a sound education for its pupils. It has many strengths and is maintaining a clear direction for its future at a difficult time in its development. It is intent on raising standards for its pupils. The teaching for the pupils is good throughout the school. Pupils learn well. Although many of them do not reach the standards expected of them for their age in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave for secondary school, most achieve well. Few higher attaining pupils reach the higher levels. The significant proportion who have special educational needs are helped very well in their learning. The school is inclusive in its policies and practices and has very good relationships with parents. The school is led and managed soundly, but because of falling rolls the high cost of educating each pupil means it does not give satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Pupils have good attitudes to their work and behaviour is good.
- The school has very effective links with parents and carers and they think highly of the school.
- The school makes good provision for ensuring the care and welfare of the pupils.
- The head teacher gives strong leadership at a time of change in the school. She has vision for the future of the school and works resolutely towards it.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards in English, mathematics and science.
- The use of checks of pupils' work to raise standards of attainment for higher attaining pupils.
- The roles and responsibilities of subject co-ordinators.
- The school's actions towards the agreed plan to recover the budget deficit.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made sound improvement since it was last inspected in March 1997 and is well placed to make further improvements. It has resolved most of the key issues identified at the last inspection. Although standards of attainment are still below average, overall the school has kept pace with the rising overall trend and standards are improving in reading, writing, mathematics and science in the infants. Teaching and learning in information and communication technology (ICT) is good in the infants and pupils in Year 2 now attain at the expectation for their ages. The school has improved its provision in line with new initiatives for ICT. The school knows the pupils well and individual pupils' attainment is tracked carefully as pupils move through the school. It has good procedures for improving attendance, which is beginning to show signs of improvement. The school has suitable plans of work for all subjects except in music and has adopted the National Strategies in literacy and numeracy. Teachers' planning clearly identifies what pupils are to learn in lessons. Systems for checking pupils' work are in place for English, mathematics and science, but are just beginning in other subjects. The school has not yet developed a planned programme for the monitoring of teaching.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	E*	E	E	D	well above average A
mathematics	E*	E	E*	E	above average B
science	E*	E	E*	E*	average C
					below average D
					well below average E
					lowest 5% of E*
					schools

The results for Year 6 pupils in English, mathematics and science, taken together, over the past three years have kept in line with the national trend. The school exceeded its targets in 1999 but has not done so since. It has set challenging school targets for pupils in Year 6 for English and mathematics in the current year. In comparison with schools nationally in the 2000 tests, pupils in Year 6 attained well below the national average in English. Standards in mathematics and science were very low and were in the lowest 5 per cent of schools nationally. Compared with schools with a similar proportion of free school meals, results were better in English and mathematics but were the same for science. These comparisons do not take into account the numbers and levels of pupils with special educational needs within a small test group of pupils. This makes the comparisons of results against national and similar schools unreliable. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs adversely influences the school's test results at the end of the juniors. Another factor which contributes to the low results in comparison with national and similar schools, is the high proportion of movement in the school's population. This means that many of the pupils who join the school towards the end of the juniors and have special educational needs, have not had the benefit of the school's good provision and teaching. When pupils start in Year 1, they do not reach the goals identified for them in the national guidance for this age group in any of the areas of learning. In comparison with all schools, in 2000, pupils' results at the age of seven were very low in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. Results were better in comparison with similar schools where reading and

writing were well below average and in mathematics were below average. Inspection findings show that although standards are below average in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are improving. This is indicated in the most recent test results (2001) for pupils in Year 2 where pupils' attainments compared with similar schools have risen in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The school's emphasis on English is having an effect in raising standards across the school and standards are rising in reading, writing and mathematics in the infants. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have improved and pupils attain at the expected level, as they do in religious education. In most other National Curriculum subjects, pupils' attainments are satisfactory. They achieve well in art and design and design and technology because most of them begin school with little appreciation of art and creativity.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes in lessons and work well making steady progress.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good; most pupils behave well in lessons and in the playground due to the high expectation of good behaviour by all staff. Those who find it difficult to manage their behaviour are supported well by staff who ensure that they do not distract others from their learning.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory; relationships are good between pupils and adults, but pupils do not always listen to each other and value each others' contributions to lessons. The school encourages pupils to take responsibilities and to help in daily routines.
Attendance	As a result of the good emphasis the school gives to attendance and punctuality, rates of attendance are improving although they are still unsatisfactory and not yet up to the national average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	good	good	good

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.*

Teaching throughout the school is good overall. There was a small proportion of very good teaching in the infants and in the Foundation Stage. Based on what they already can do, most pupils achieve well in their lessons because of the good teaching they receive. A significant proportion of pupils find it hard to remember and recall what they have learned previously and they are helped well by teachers who spend time recapping and questioning effectively on what pupils have learnt. English and mathematics are taught well although some lessons in mental mathematics need improving. Pupils' handwriting and the presentation of written work is poor. However, teachers emphasise writing well and pupils learn to punctuate their work accurately. The school meets the needs of most pupils well. Teachers check on pupils' learning consistently in mathematics, science and English, but they do not always use the results of these checks well enough to provide work of a suitable challenge for higher attaining pupils. Teaching of science is satisfactory overall, although it is taught well in Years 2 and 6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the good knowledge and understanding and management skills that teachers and assistants have of teaching pupils with special educational needs and those with Statements of Special Educational Need.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good for children in the three to six age range and satisfactory in the infants and the juniors; the curriculum meets statutory requirements and offers an appropriate range of experiences, although insufficient time is given to music.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils make good progress towards the well-devised targets in their individual educational plans which are regularly and frequently reviewed.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Pupils are assessed when they begin the school and make satisfactory progress in their learning. Teachers ensure that they are included well in lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development. Provision for social development is good and this is being helped by the recent introduction of a programme for personal, social and health education.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for its pupils. It pays good attention to checking and supporting pupils' personal development and behaviour. Assessment of pupils' academic progress is satisfactory.

The school works very closely with parents and the community who think highly of the efforts the school makes. Parents are made welcome in school and are provided with good information on their children's learning.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	The head teacher leads and manages the school well. She is ably supported by the deputy head teacher. Not all subject leaders play a large enough part in the management of their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are keen and supportive of the school. They work well together for shaping the future developments in the school. They support the local community well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school reflects its aims and values in its work well. It checks its performance thoroughly against national and similar schools.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school uses funding appropriately for the benefit of the pupils.

The school currently has a large number of teachers and has a favourable teacher to pupil ratio compared to most schools. It is undergoing a transition to develop inclusive provision and additional resources to admit pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs from a wider area. The building of the new accommodation is imminent as is the development of a new facility of a sports and arts hall. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory. The school applies the principles of best value soundly.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• They feel the school is approachable and they are kept well informed.</li><li>• The school expects the children to work hard and to achieve their best.</li><li>• The teaching is good and the children like school.</li><li>• Most parents consider behaviour in the school to be good.</li><li>• Most parents think their children have the right amount of homework.</li><li>• The school is well led and managed.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A few parents think that behaviour in the school could be improved.</li><li>• A few parents think children do not have the right amount of homework.</li></ul>

Inspectors agree with all the positive points parents make, but consider that behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils receive about the right amount of homework.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1 Standards of attainment are not high enough and results in tests show that pupils do not reach the national average expected of them by the time they leave for the secondary school or at the end of Year 2 in English, mathematics and science. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. It reflects the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and Statements of Special Educational Need which depresses the school's performance in tests. Test results also include a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and Statements of Special Need who join the school towards the end of the juniors and who have not benefited throughout their education from the school's very good provision and teaching for pupils with special educational needs. However, inspection findings show that standards are rising in English for pupils in Year 6, and in reading, writing, mathematics and science for pupils in Year 2. These findings are similar to the 2000 results for pupils at the end of Year 2 and pupils have continued to show improvement in 2001. Pupils in Year 6 who sat the tests in 2001 did not maintain the overall improvements in English made in 2000. This was due to the make up of the group of pupils which included a large group of pupils with special educational needs and with Statements of Special Educational Needs. The good tracking systems the school has in place for pupils shows that of these, a significant proportion of pupils (40 per cent) had recently joined the school during the course of the key stage. In addition those who had been in the school in Year 2 had begun Year 3 with a very low level of attainment.

2 In the results of tests for 2000 at Year 2, both boys' and girls' performance is similar in writing and mathematics although boys did better than girls in reading. Results in 2000 show slight variations in the performance of boys and girls in Year 6 for mathematics and science where boys did slightly better. The boys outperformed girls whose performance dropped from the previous year. Since then the school has addressed this issue and in 2001 closed the gap in performance between boys and girls in the infants and in mathematics and science in Year 6.

3 Pupils who do not have special educational needs make steady progress and most reach the levels expected of them based on their previous attainment at the end of the infants or at the time they join the school. However, some higher attaining pupils are not always targeted and monitored closely enough by teachers during the year to make sure that they make the best possible progress. Work set for them is not always sufficiently challenging to help them to progress to the higher than expected levels.

4 The few pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress in their learning and in learning English. Pupils with special educational needs and with Statements of Special Educational Need make good gains, in skills, knowledge and understanding. By Year 6, they mostly achieve standards that are below or, for some, well below those usually expected for their age but are satisfactory in relation to their identified needs and specific targets.

5 Over recent years to 2000, taking English, mathematics and science together, results at the end of the juniors have kept broadly in line with the national trend. Although the school exceeded its targets in 1999, it has not done so since. Targets set in 2000, although modest, were challenging and not realistic for the particular groups of pupils who sat the tests.

6 Compared with schools nationally, in 2000, pupils in Year 6 attained standards in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally in mathematics and science, and were well below the expected standard in English. In comparison with schools with a similar proportion of free school meals, pupils' performance was better in English and mathematics, but the same in science. In

English, standards were below the national average and in mathematics well below. However, in science pupils did very badly. As a result of pupils' below and well below average performance in the 2000 tests, the school has put into place further staff training for raising standards in English and mathematics and this has already begun to make an improvement in English. An emphasis on mathematics is planned to take place shortly, followed by science. The co-ordinator for science is working towards further improvements in the subject and an action plan is in place to raise standards. Staff training is planned for later this year. The indications are that in the 2001 test results, standards for the group of pupils in Year 6 were similar to those in the previous year.

7 Comparisons with both similar schools and those nationally do not take into account several factors which contribute to and adversely effect the school's overall performance in standardised tests, and makes comparisons of results year on year unreliable. One is the variation in size of the small groups of pupils sitting the tests in some years, and another factor is the very high percentage of pupils who find learning difficult and are registered as having special educational needs and Statements of Special Educational Needs. For instance, in 2001, of the small group of Year 6 pupils who sat the test, almost a quarter had a Statement of Special Educational Need. Two pupils were absent for the tests in English and one for the tests in mathematics and science. There had also been a high level of movement (26 per cent) of pupils in and out of the school in the juniors for that year group. This means that performance data from the end of Year 2 can only be used reliably for the small number of pupils who remained in the school throughout the juniors. Generally many pupils join the school towards the end of the juniors and most have special educational needs. The careful tracking of pupils shows that those who stay in the school make satisfactory progress in English and mathematics based on their previous learning, although very few average and more-able pupils attain at the higher levels. Inspection findings show that in the current Year 6 group of pupils, standards are below average in English, mathematics and science. This is an improvement on previous results. However, only one pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Needs in the group of 13 Year 6 pupils, although a significant proportion are on the special educational needs register.

8 When children start in the reception class they have low and, for a significant proportion of children, very low levels of attainment. Only a half of the children from the nursery continue into the reception class as most then attend reception classes in schools nearer their homes that do not have nurseries. However, despite good teaching in the nursery and reception classes, a significant proportion have not attained the early learning goals identified for their age when they start in Year 1. In comparison with all schools nationally, the 2000 test results showed that the performance of seven-year-olds was in the lowest 5 per cent for schools in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, results in reading and writing, were well below expected standards but in mathematics were better, although they still fell short of expectations. However, test results in the same subjects for seven-year-olds in 2001, although still below average, indicate an impact of the systems in place and show that pupils have increased their rate of progress.

9 The head teacher has a good understanding of what is happening in the school and how well the pupils achieve from the very good records in place to track pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science as they move through the school. This gives a good overview of how each pupil is performing each year in relation to their previous attainment in these subjects.

10 Pupils have below average skills in English, mathematics and science at the end of Years 2 and 6. However, standards seen on the inspection and the achievements of pupils show that standards are higher than is suggested in the test results of the previous two years from 1999. Pupils are benefiting from good teaching and a lot of help in small classes, and from working in small groups with good assistance from learning support staff.

11 In English, standards of speaking and listening are below average for pupils in Year 6, and for a significant proportion of pupils in Year 2, they are well below average. Standards in writing are similar for both age groups, but pupils in the infants and in the juniors are achieving better in reading. Standards in mathematics are below the expectations at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. This is because pupils' knowledge of number does not build up sufficiently well. In science, standards are brought down because pupils' independent skills in the important areas of experimental and investigation and the recording of their work are below those expected for their ages. These findings are a significant improvement on past test results in reading, mathematics and science. In English and mathematics, the school's use of the literacy and numeracy strategies is having a definite effect on raising standards. In science, the subject leadership and the organisation of the science curriculum with the use of the nationally recommended guidelines carefully tailored for the needs of the pupils is having a positive effect.

12 Standards of attainment in ICT have risen since the last inspection and pupils meet expectations in Years 2 and 6 and achieve well in both key stages. This is a good improvement since the last inspection when standards were below expectations. In religious education, the standards pupils achieve by the end of the infants and the juniors, meet the expectations of the locally agreed guidelines.

13 In most other National Curriculum subjects, the standards of work seen at both key stages indicate that pupils' standards of attainment are satisfactory and that they make satisfactory, although sometimes uneven, progress in their learning overall. In art and design, and design and technology, pupils achieve well because most of them start school with little appreciation of art and little creativity. Pupils' attainments in physical education are as is expected for their age in both the infants and the juniors. In history, Year 6 pupils do not reach the expected level for their age. No firm judgement on standards could be made in music at either Years 2 or 6, and in geography at Years 6, or history at Year 2.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

14 Most pupils show good attitudes to their work, which enables them to make steady and often good progress in their learning. They show interest and try hard in their lessons. Pupils' attitudes have continued to be good since the time of the previous inspection, due to the good teaching and constant encouragement in lessons from adults. For example, in a religious education lesson, pupils in Years 1 and 2 were fascinated to listen to their teacher's recording of the sound of trees. They persevered with writing sentences on the Jewish festival of Tu B'Shevat and its celebration of trees. In some classes there are a small number of pupils who find it very difficult to concentrate despite the very best efforts of adults to keep them on task.

15 The school provides well for the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs and Statements of Special Educational Need and for the inclusion of boys and girls. For instance, pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need are integrated well into lessons. The school has completed and published a Gender in School project as part of the in-service training for staff with the help of the local educational psychologist. This has had a good impact on the effect of teachers' questioning skills, which are carefully directed.

16 Most parents are pleased with the standard of pupils' behaviour. The behaviour of pupils is good in and around school because of the high expectations and drive by adults to encourage pupils to behave well. The need for exclusion is rare, which is a result of the good support for individual pupils who need help to manage their own behaviour. Most pupils behave well in class and in the playground. Moments of rough play are quickly dealt with by staff and pupils respond well to adults' supervision. There are good relationships between pupils and adults, but sometimes in class pupils do not display good attitudes to each other and so disrupt

the purpose of lessons. For instance, when pupils in Years 5 and 6 sat in a circle and discussed with their teacher, some of the class could not settle to listen to the others talking about good and bad feelings. The class teacher was able to change the activity to regain their attention and help them to work together.

17 Pupils' personal development is satisfactory and they are encouraged to act as monitors at break times, in class and in assemblies. The children in the nursery help willingly to tidy up.

18 The school works very hard to encourage good attendance and the rates of attendance are now higher than at the time of the last inspection. In the year 1999-2000 rates of attendance were very low compared with the national average. Due to the efforts of the school and the education welfare officer, attendance is improving but is still unsatisfactory. Most absences are reported by parents.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19 Pupils are taught well. Almost all the teaching in the 38 lessons seen during the inspection was at least satisfactory, with 71 per cent being good or better. Teaching was good in 63 per cent of the lessons and very good in a further 8 per cent. It was unsatisfactory in only one lesson observed. Good teaching was seen in the Foundation Stage, the infants and the juniors. A significant amount of good teaching was seen in Years 2 and 6 and in the nursery. The teaching for groups of pupils with special educational needs was consistently good or very good. This represents an improvement in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. At that time, there was slightly more unsatisfactory teaching and less very good teaching. The proportion of good and very good teaching enables pupils to make good progress in their learning. Consequently, standards are showing signs of improvement particularly in English and in ICT. Teachers and classroom assistants have had further training in English and in ICT. This is raising the level of pupils' attainments across the school in both of these subjects. Lessons in English, art and design, physical education and religious education were consistently good. In music, no full lessons were seen and no judgement was made on the quality of teaching. In mathematics, lessons were predominantly good with some being satisfactory. One unsatisfactory lesson was seen in mathematics. Teaching of science is satisfactory overall. It is taught well in Years 2 and 6.

20 The teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is good overall. It is sometimes very good in the nursery. The teacher and the nursery nurses make a strong team. They provide a broad base of experiences and activities for the children that are based firmly in the nationally identified areas of learning for the children's ages. The staff work very hard to develop children's personal and social skills and to build up mutual trust amongst the children and the adults who are responsible for them. There is a unified approach in the nursery classes and the reception class which ensures that the move from the nursery into reception is smooth. A half of the children leave the nursery to go onto other schools. Teachers in the Foundation Stage give suitable high priority to improving children's language skills and their ability to communicate. These skills are well below average, and for some children poor, when they start in the reception class. The staff who work with the youngest children have a very good understanding of their needs. They expect the children to do well and the activities they provide are well thought out. They help the children make good progress but despite the good provision and teaching, although they gain ground, most children are still well below the expected standards when they reach the end of the reception year.

21 Taken overall the teaching in the infants and the juniors is good. In good and very good lessons the teachers communicate very well with the pupils and provide imaginative ideas and opportunities in the context of lessons to grab pupils' attention. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 became "forensic scientists" during their science investigations, and in an art lesson for Years 4 and 5 the task of making a chair became much more exciting and had more possibilities when the chair became a "throne". Subjects are linked together well in both infant and junior classes to make work more interesting. For instance, the pupils in Year 1 consolidated what they had learned in a religious education lesson, about caring for wild creatures, by producing posters, discussing, writing sentences, singing songs and making clay models of hedgehogs. In these lessons, pupils show good interest and concentration and make good progress. In some lessons, pupils' concentration lapses when they are asked to listen for long periods. Teachers use resources well in lessons. For instance, the youngest pupils respond well to the use of toys used interactively in lessons and catchy acronyms such as WALT and WILF; "What I'm looking for" and "We are learning to", to remind pupils what they are learning.

22 Teachers have very effective strategies for maintaining order and keeping pupils' attention on the work in hand. They manage pupils very well. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and use the school procedures well for making sure that pupils respect each

others' opportunities to learn. Pupils who have difficulties in managing their behaviour are supported well by teachers, learning assistants, the head teacher and staff from outside agencies who work with individual pupils. Staff ensure that all pupils are given good opportunities to learn including the few pupils who have English as an additional language. For instance, pupils in one class have all learned the animal names of the groups in the class in a foreign language. These are used and interchanged frequently so this helps to make the pupil feel at home and that his home language is respected. The teachers deploy learning assistants very well across the school. They are well qualified and give good quality support which makes a good contribution to pupils' learning.

23 The teachers usually match the work well to pupils' learning needs, but they do not always provide harder tasks for the higher attaining pupils who do not always make enough progress. Teachers do not always use the outcomes of the assessments they make in English, mathematics and science well enough to move on the higher attaining pupils. In science, all pupils have similar ways of recording their investigations and these are not tailored carefully to the abilities of the higher attaining pupils.

24 Teachers' day to day assessment of how well pupils are learning and the marking of work varies. Teachers do not consistently use the outcomes of assessments to plan new work. Many verbal indications are given to pupils and they are generally kept well motivated when they know how they are getting on. However, the marking of pupils' work does not always give pupils enough useful information and sufficient evidence for pupils and parents to be proud of in their books.

25 The teaching of literacy skills and numeracy skills is good throughout the school. Teachers have benefited from training both inside and outside of school in literacy and mathematics. Further training is due to take place in mathematics shortly. Teachers have a good understanding of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy and adapt them well to the needs of mixed aged classes and the high numbers of pupils with special educational needs. This enables pupils to make good progress in their learning. However, not all teachers have sufficiently high expectations of pupils' handwriting and presentation of their work. In mathematics, the mental and oral session at the beginning of mathematics lessons is not always used well enough and in some lessons it is missed out altogether and fitted in at other times of the day. It is often too slow and loses the impact to build up pupils' number knowledge satisfactorily. Many pupils have difficulties in remembering what they have learned and teachers often spend time on recapping previous work. On these occasions, the learning for the able and more-able pupils is slowed down. The teaching of ICT has improved since the last inspection and this is having a good impact on pupils' learning. Teaching of science is always at least satisfactory and it is often good. Teachers give good opportunities for scientific investigations and this is helping to improve pupils' understanding although this has not yet impacted on test results. Not all staff have sufficient expertise and are confident in teaching music. This means that music teaching is restricted to a few staff and affects the sequence of the skills that pupils learn.

26 All teachers are experienced in teaching pupils with special educational needs and the very good teaching and provision they receive is a strength of the school. The school uses the help of outside agencies very well. Class teachers develop good specialist knowledge with the help of the local educational psychology service to which individual teachers readily have access should they need it. Children's difficulties are identified quickly and outside agencies, such as speech therapists, help with specific problems. Teachers prepare and review individual education plans with the co-ordinator for special educational needs who is a specialist teacher and trained in the Reading Recovery programme. Class teachers are fully aware of the difficulties the pupils have. Individual plans are reviewed frequently each half term and pupils' targets are assessed. The school makes good provision for pupils with Statements of Special

Educational Need and the very good relationships that the school has developed with parents means that they attend annual reviews confidently.

## **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?**

27 As at the time of the last inspection, the school teaches all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education and meets statutory requirements giving appropriate time to each subject. There has been considerable improvement in the curriculum and provision for information and communication technology.

28 The curriculum for the children in the nursery and reception class is good. Pupils are given a wide range of interesting activities to explore and are well supported in their learning. In the infants and the juniors, teachers plan work satisfactorily to make the curriculum relevant to the pupils including the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. For instance, work in a dance lesson for pupils in Year 6 was linked to the theme of the book Harry Potter which pupils were studying in English and this made their task more interesting. Religious education is taught in accordance with the locally agreed guidelines. The curriculum for information and communication technology has been significantly improved since the last inspection and provision is now meeting the needs of pupils in both key stages.

29 The school uses the National Strategies for the teaching of Literacy and Numeracy and in other subjects, apart from music, it has adopted nationally recommended guidelines. The music curriculum is not fully in place and does not have a recent scheme of work, which means that pupils do not develop their music skills sequentially building on what they have learnt.

30 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Individual educational plans are well written and frequently reviewed. Pupils are supported very well in school with all teachers and support assistants trained in meeting their needs. Although some pupils are regularly withdrawn from class as part of this support, they receive the same curriculum as other pupils at a level appropriate to their needs.

31 The school is very good at including all pupils in its activities. Teachers take care to include all pupils, including those with English as an additional language, in all activities and in teachers' questioning. Pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need receive the same curriculum as others and are involved in the same activities. There is equality of access and opportunities for all pupils; teachers take care for instance in their questioning of pupils that both boys and girls have opportunities to answer. All staff make a strenuous effort to include pupils of all abilities and backgrounds into every activity.

32 The school makes sound provision for the personal, social and health education of its pupils. There is a breakfast club and snack-time as part of the school day and a 'Healthy Eating' project has just been launched. It provides a series of opportunities in science, discussion times, and visits by the community police officer to help pupils towards a better understanding of their own health and self-image. Pupils learn about the misuse of drugs and in Year 6 towards the end of the summer term the school nurse gives specialist help in sex education. This is in accordance with the governors' policy.

33 Parents are concerned about the lack of provision for extra-curricular activities. Inspection evidence indicates a satisfactory programme and increasing planned provision beginning after the coming half term. The school is endeavouring to increase the number of clubs and activities available for pupils. Since the beginning of the term for instance, a new volunteer has taken on the provision of a weekly football club for pupils. However, currently

there are no opportunities in music or for pupils to learn an instrument, such as the recorder, as is seen in most schools. The school arranges theatre, cinema and museum visits as part of the curriculum.

34 The school adds to the curriculum provision in school through good links with organisations within the community to offer coaching in football and in dance. There is a residential visit for Year 6 pupils but this has been restricted this year, as have other visits due to the current problems with foot and mouth infection. The local vicar attends the school for some assemblies and pupils sing for older people in the community at Christmas.

35 Relationships with other schools are good. Links with a local special school develop pupils' awareness of children with physical disabilities. Transfer arrangements to secondary school are good with visits by Year 5 and Year 6 pupils as well as visits from subject leaders. Towards the end of the year, pupils with special educational needs meet with tutors from the new school, who attend reviews with parents and pupils.

36 The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Assemblies develop themes such as friendship and use prayer, with time for personal reflection, as well as celebration of achievement. Classical music is played during registration and snack times and the effect on the pupils is not interrupted by any immediate discussion of thoughts. Later discussion, after time for reflection, shows a good range of thoughts by the pupils in response to the music. Religious education lessons make a sound contribution to pupils' spiritual development. In one lesson, pupils spoke imaginatively about birds in response to a tape that the teacher had prepared of the sounds made by a rustling tree. In other lessons such as science, pupils are fascinated with the changes in texture that take place when cornflour is mixed with water.

37 The provision for pupils' social development is good. It is good for moral development. Pupils are given responsibilities, adults use praise well to develop pupils' awareness of others, and teachers group pupils in ways that encourage co-operation during lessons. Links with a local special school are developed so that pupils have the opportunity of working alongside one another and are sensitive to other people's feelings. The school takes part in singing for elderly citizens at Christmas. As a result, a good number of pupils are polite and helpful to others and try to please their teachers.

38 The PSHE programme is used satisfactorily to develop pupils' awareness of the feelings of others and to explore good behaviour roles.

39 The school provides for a satisfactory range of experiences to develop pupils' cultural awareness. Local culture is well developed with visits to the local museum in history. Appreciation of classical music is used in some classes. Dance tuition is provided for Year 6 pupils by specialist tutors. Pupils study a variety of Western artists in art and design, and are taught about world religions, such as Christianity, Buddhism and Judaism, in religious education. However, there is weakness in the teaching about the multi-cultural nature of our own society. There is a Centre for Multi-cultural Education in the region but the school has not taken advantage of it. As a result, pupils are not prepared well enough for their adult life in an increasingly multi-cultural society.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

40 The school has good procedures to care for its pupils and ensure their welfare, health and safety. Child protection arrangements are appropriate and effective with all staff aware of the procedures. The daily Breakfast Club provides a nourishing start to the day and helps to promote good attendance and punctuality. The school knows its pupils and families very well

and responds well to their needs. For instance, it supports families with the provision of a weekly "Food Co-op" which enables them to buy fresh fruit and vegetables not readily available in the community. The school makes every effort to include all pupils whatever their situation and to make them feel part of the school community. Pupils in the Year 1 and 2 class, for example, have learnt the names of their groups in Turkish and so the "lion" group can respond equally well to their teacher's call for the "Aslan" group.

41 There are thorough procedures for monitoring behaviour and to combat bullying. Parents are pleased with the way the school deals with any incidents. The school monitors attendance carefully and has a very good partnership with the education welfare officer, working together with good effect to improve the rates of attendance generally and for particular pupils. It promotes good attendance through the weekly award for the class with the highest attendance. This works well and since the beginning of the term attendance has been higher than previously.

42 The arrangements to assess and monitor pupils' academic progress in English, mathematics and science are satisfactory. The school quickly identifies children with special educational needs. Pupils are assessed by means of reliable annual tests either from when they first come into the school at the beginning of the reception class, and each year following, or at the end of the year after which they first join the school. The school analyses each pupil's performance in the national tests at the end of the infants and juniors very carefully. This is done very well and results are used to predict future levels of attainment and targets. It also makes a thorough analysis of the performance of boys and girls and of information to see where the school adds value to the pupils' progress in these subjects. Teachers have taken part in a gender project led by the local educational psychologist which has helped to close the gap between boys' and girls' performance. The checking of pupils' progress is less well developed in other subjects of the curriculum.

43 In English, results of tests in Years 2 and 6 have been used to identify areas in need of development and to inform future curriculum planning, however, although planned in the coming year this has not yet been done in mathematics and science. The school is developing assessment procedures in all other subjects except music according to the recommended guidelines.

44 Teachers use check up tests in mathematics, reading and writing to track pupils' progress however, teachers do not always use the information gained from assessments carefully enough to match the work for pupils of higher ability.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

45 The school works very hard and succeeds very well in promoting strong links with parents and the community it serves. Parents think highly of these efforts and feel that the school responds positively to any individual concerns. Almost everyone who responded to the inspection questionnaire and attended the meeting was very supportive of the school's work. The inspection team agrees with these positive views.

46 The school provides a good range of information for parents. It makes sure that parents feel welcome in school, especially at the start and end of each day when staff take the opportunity to pass on information. Some parents work for a short while with their children in the reception and Year 1 class at the beginning of each day. Parents appreciate the way in which the head teacher and staff are always available to speak to them. They receive useful information on school events in regular newsletters, and annual written reports give parents good information on their children's academic progress and on their personal development.

47 The school tries hard and is successful in reaching out to parents in order to involve them in school and in their children's learning. This begins in the nursery where there are strong links between home and school beginning with home visits made by the nursery teacher. Most parents are pleased with the regular amount of homework the pupils have and support their children well. They are encouraged to listen to their children read at home and this helps their children's progress. The school arranges regular courses for parents such as in computer and family literacy.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

48 The school is in a critical situation, through no fault of its own, with falling rolls. The head teacher is managing this crisis well and provides strong and determined leadership. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and is managed very well. As a result, the very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and Statements of Special Educational Need achieve well based on their previous learning. The school works closely with local outside agencies such as the educational behaviour support service and the educational psychology service for the benefit of the pupils. They regard the school highly and it has been chosen from several other schools in the area to provide facilities for the education of pupils in the wider area of Carlisle with a variety of special or medical needs from September 2002. It is to change its designated status to a school with a strategic learning facility which will include pupils with specific educational needs. In addition, it has been chosen as the recipient of a grant and a total of £450 000 for the building of a new sports and arts hall. This regeneration of the school is due, in the main, to the resolute efforts and vision of the head teacher. However, management of the current situation has recently deflected the emphasis away from some important areas.

49 The school has dealt satisfactorily with most of the issues from the previous report in order to raise the standards of pupils' attainment. Indications from the most recent results for 2001 show that in comparison with similar schools, standards of pupils' attainments in Year 2 are rising in reading, writing, mathematics and science. However, it does not have a planned programme for the systematic checking of the quality of teaching. It has improved the procedures for assessment since the previous inspection although the results of the information gained is not always used sufficiently well to clearly identify and match the work to the more-able pupils in order for them to make accelerated progress. Over recent years, although below the national average, the performance of Year 6 pupils in tests has kept in line with the national rising trend. However, the school did not reach its targets in English and mathematics in 2000 or 2001. The targets, were challenging for the Year 6 group of pupils who reflected a high level of special educational needs and Statements of Special Educational Needs. Many pupils had joined the school towards the end of the juniors and had a Statement of Special Educational Need.

50 The school is in a period of transition. The demolition programme of housing by the local council on the local estate from which the school draws nearly all of its pupils, is almost completed and has resulted in a significant decrease of pupils over the last two years and a high level of turbulence in the school's population. The school has lost almost a half of its pupils since demolition began two years ago and is now smaller than the average primary school. As a consequence of this enforced reduction in the number of pupils, the budget has been much reduced and one permanent teacher made redundant. After almost fully recovering the deficit from the time of the last inspection, the sudden large decrease in numbers of pupils has led to a new significant deficit of over £40,000. The head teacher and governing body is working very closely with the local education authority to recover the amount and to reduce costs over the next three years. A well-considered three-year plan to recover the deficit is in place. In the more immediate future, plans for the opening of the inclusive Strategic Facility will help towards reducing costs. The budget deficit is carefully monitored and checked by the school in close co-

operation with the local education authority's finance department. A finance officer visits the school regularly. He carefully checks on spending and updates the school on its financial position. The school is beginning the process of reviewing staffing for the coming year to ensure that the school works within the budget plan considered and agreed by the governing body.

51 The school allocates the funding for specific grants appropriately. It makes sure that it spends money wisely by making comparisons for goods and services and is particularly proactive in bidding and obtaining funds from available sources such as government funding and the Early Years Partnership. At the time of the inspection, the school was without an administrative assistant for several weeks following the appointment of a new person to the post. However, the school ran smoothly with the help of minimum additional time given to the support staff. The school uses technology well. For instance, all school documentation, such as subject and curricular policies and lists of pupils are readily available on computers. Teachers and the head teacher use computers readily for planning lessons, writing and action plans for subjects.

52 Governors are keen and supportive of the school. They support the head teacher and work together well in shaping the future developments of the school. They are very supportive of the local community and the difficulties it faces. The head teacher is a member of the local community forum and keeps abreast of all developments.

53 The leadership of the head teacher, staff and governors provides a clear way forward for the school and the school development plan appropriately emphasises the need to raise educational standards and the action to be taken to achieve this in English, mathematics and science. The school makes a very thorough analysis of the results from national tests and carefully tracks each pupil's progress as they move through the school. Careful comparisons between boys' and girls' performance are made and the school analyses the areas to improve to close the gap between them. However, the school has not analysed the results of pupils' past performance in all tests to find where pupils need to improve. This has been done in English but is only just beginning in mathematics and science. Writing has been an area which has been prioritised for improvement. Teachers are currently receiving further whole school training in literacy which is having a good effect on improving standards in writing. A programme of additional training in numeracy is planned for the next half term. Although some monitoring of standards and teaching has been done by senior staff and outside consultants, subject co-ordinators do not all take responsibility for monitoring the standards of work in their subjects. Assessment is not yet fully in place for subjects other than mathematics, English and science and not all co-ordinators know what standards the pupils achieve. Job descriptions are in place, but these are out of date and are not specific enough about the responsibilities and the roles of subject co-ordinators.

54 Although the school does not have clear written and published aims, all staff agree and pursue shared values and work diligently and consistently on behalf of the pupils, the parents and the community. This is reflected very well on a day to day basis in the school. The school is inclusive in its outlook and practice. It welcomes pupils of all levels of abilities, including pupils with special educational needs and with Statements of Special Educational Need. Pupils are taught alongside each other. The school has a large staff of well-qualified and dedicated teachers and the pupil:teacher ratio for the current year is much lower than in most primary schools. Newly qualified teachers receive excellent support, both through very good mentoring by the head teacher, which is tailored to meet their own particular needs, and from additional good staff support. The school has a generous number of experienced teaching assistants and nursery nurses who are well qualified and help pupils well in their learning.

55 The school has adequate accommodation. The nursery is bright and cheerful and most classrooms and corridors have good displays of pupils' work. The learning resources of the school are satisfactory, with good provision for information and communication technology

through access to the Cumbria Credits Suite. However, there are no resources currently in place for teaching older pupils about control through the use of instruments for recording factual information about wind and temperature or pulse rate. There are appropriate facilities for physical education teaching which support the full range of the curriculum. The library is spacious and well organised with just enough books for the number of pupils, although some books are out of date and there has been little recent replenishment of new books.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

### 56 The school should now

#### **(1) Raise standards in English, mathematics and science.**

##### In English

- give further opportunities for speaking, and encourage pupils to express themselves in longer sentences using the appropriate vocabulary across all subjects of the curriculum
- give more opportunities for pupils to write at length across subjects of the curriculum
- ensure that all staff have high expectations of pupils' presentation of their work and implement a consistent strategy to deal with untidy work and handwriting (Paragraphs; 11, 72, 73, 80)

##### In mathematics

- improve teaching in the mental arithmetic oral session at the beginning of each numeracy lesson to enable pupils to increase their number knowledge and calculations more quickly
- match work carefully to pupils' levels of ability (Paragraphs; 11, 25, 83, 85, 87)

##### In science

- ensure that pupils record and present the results of their scientific enquiries with increasing levels of detail
- increase the use of ICT in the curriculum
- use the results of national tests to identify areas for improvement in the curriculum
- make marking of pupils' work more useful and consistent to help them move forward (Paragraphs; 11, 23, 24, 25, 43, 91, 92, 112)

#### **2) Promote best progress for higher attaining pupils by;**

- extending monitoring procedures to include the identification of the more-able pupils and providing them with a higher level of challenge
- reduce the reliance on worksheets that restrict pupils' writing and ways of thinking
- using the results of assessments to inform teachers' planning (Paragraphs; 23, 24, 87, 91)

#### **3) Improve the leadership and management of the school by ;**

- clarifying and developing the role of the subject co-ordinators to enable them to play a larger part in the development of their subjects by monitoring standards
- ensuring that all subjects are assessed and analysing the outcomes of the assessment
- monitoring the quality of teaching more rigorously
- ensuring that the school recovers the accumulated deficit by working within and implementing the agreed plan (Paragraphs; 49, 50, 53, 98, 101, 108, 115)

**In addition to these key issues for action, the following less significant weakness should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:**

- Continue to monitor and improve pupils' rates of attendance to bring them in line with the national average. (Paragraph 18, 41)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

38

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

32

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	3	24	10	1	0	0
Percentage	0	8	63	26	3	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents almost three percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	20.5	103
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	60

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	67

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.8

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6

National comparative data	5.2
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	9	5	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	7	6	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	50% (48%)	43% (56%)	64% (56%)
	National	83% (82%)	84% (83%)	90% (87%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	2	3	7
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	14% (40%)	21% (12%)	50% (24%)
	National	84% (82%)	88% (86%)	88% (87%)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Since each cohort of boys and girls is 10 or less the figures are omitted.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	10	9	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	7	6	6
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	37% ( 58% )	32% (58% )	32% (67%)
	National	75% (70%)	72% (69% )	85% (78%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	8	11	5
Percentage of pupils	School	42% (58%)	58% (58%)	26% (67%)

at NC level 4 or above	National	70% (68%)	72% (69%)	79% (75%)
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*Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.  
 Since each cohort of boys and girls is 10 or less the figures are omitted.*

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	142
Any other minority ethnic group	2

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

*This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.8
Average class size	20.6

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	117

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25
Number of pupils per FTE adult	11.5

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000 - 2001
	£
Total income	362,860
Total expenditure	391,304
Expenditure per pupil	2,288
Balance brought forward from previous year	-20,388
Balance carried forward to next year	-48,832

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*



## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out

144

Number of questionnaires returned

29

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	79	14	7	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	66	34	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	38	14	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	55	36	9	0	0
The teaching is good.	79	21	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	76	17	7	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	90	7	0	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	85	11	0	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	75	18	0	4	4
The school is well led and managed.	71	21	0	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	75	21	4	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	57	29	0	0	14

### **Other issues raised by parents**

Parents are very pleased with the standards in the nursery.  
Parents see the school as welcoming and it promotes self worth in the pupils.

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

57 The provision made for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Children start nursery in the September after they are three. Over half the children in the nursery classes leave to go to reception classes in other schools. Although the level of attainment for children entering the nursery is overall below average, for those children that remain at the school their attainment on entry to the reception class is well below average.

58 The 41 children in the nursery attend part time. The teacher and nursery nurses work very well as a team and create a warm and secure environment for children to start their education. The nursery unit is organised efficiently and managed well although accommodation is cramped.

59 The school does everything it can to build up positive relationships with parents. Home visits and a carefully planned staggered start ensure that children's first experiences of school are happy ones. Once the children start nursery, parents are encouraged to come in and help their children choose an activity. This practice continues into the reception class where parents can help children with their first tasks of the day. Parents are therefore given good support, so that they know what their children are learning at school and this assists some to help the children at home.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

60 Children make good progress but do not reach the goals expected by the time they leave the reception class. Teaching in this area is good. From the moment the children enter the nursery, staff make children's social and personal development a high priority. The nursery team provides good opportunities for children to play together through a range of suitable and purposeful activities. Although children enjoy the tasks that they choose, they develop independence slowly and require the support and encouragement of adults to help them learn from what they are doing. For example, a small group of children playing by themselves on a road layout, pushed vehicles aimlessly around the mat and found it hard to respond to questions. Many children lack confidence and wait for an adult or another child to take the initiative. For example, in the nursery when two children were working on the computer with an adult, one was very unsure so another child said, 'I will try shall I?'. However, children co-operate and take turns readily when playing games with an adult. Adults set good examples and children learn the difference between right and wrong. Snack time is used effectively both in the nursery and the reception class. Children sit quietly at tables while their friends give out the snacks and the adults give out the milk. Snack time also gives the children opportunities to try food that may be unfamiliar to them. For example, some children are reluctant to try fruit. After a baking session the biscuits were proudly shared. However, at such times, the adults present are often too involved in the organisation of the snacks rather than in sitting with the children to encourage conversation.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

61 The quality of teaching is good and teachers strive with success to improve children's learning. Most children, especially in the nursery, are spellbound by stories and learn to listen carefully and expectantly. The teacher reads with good expression and always involves the children with skilful questioning. For example, in a story where a hamster had escaped from its cage, suspense was built up and children eagerly examined each picture looking for the missing 'Sammy'. In the reception class, children enjoy sharing 'Big Books' and, when given the chance,

will join in with repetitive parts of the story. Writing skills are poor. Children do not readily choose to experiment with writing. Writing materials are provided in areas such as the 'hospital' and children are encouraged to write 'patients' notes' and take telephone messages. Although teachers and other practitioners show children how to write in different situations and miss no opportunities to do so, for instance, in a religious education lesson in the reception class, children develop writing skills and letter formation slowly. Staff engage children constantly in both planned and spontaneous conversations, which help them to listen and respond appropriately as they work. However, children are reluctant to start a conversation. When playing with each other in the 'hospital' in the reception class, or with cars on a town layout in the nursery, most children played alongside other children rather than with them. Despite the good range of activities and teaching that children are offered, by the end of the reception year they have not reached the goals that are expected for children of this age.

62 In the reception class, the teacher used a soft toy cat very effectively to introduce the letter and sound 'c'. 'Clever Cat' caught the children's imagination and they tried very hard to sort out the objects in the cat's box that started with a 'c' sound. However, many children have poor memory skills and teachers spend a lot of time consolidating what children learn. By the end of the lesson, not all could remember what they had learned with the teacher at the start of the lesson.

63 The introduction of the literacy hour in reception is effective in developing some areas of children's literacy skills. However, whole class teaching sessions, which combine sitting down activities both before and after, mean that children have to sit for too long and for many this is beyond their levels of concentration.

### **Mathematical development**

64 In the mathematical area of learning, the children do not reach the levels of understanding expected by the end of the reception year. Despite good teaching, children have problems in remembering what they have learnt. In the nursery, children have good experiences in sorting and matching. For example, children matched shapes of circles and squares to the spaces in a jigsaw and with the support of an adult said the names of the shapes. They sorted out plastic animal shapes, matching them by colour, but knew few colours beyond red and blue.

65 Counting skills are regularly practised in both the nursery and reception by the use of counting rhymes. During counting activities children take pride in counting to each other, as a whole class or in small groups. In the reception class, large cards with numbers on were used well to support children's counting to ten. With good support from the teacher, the children managed to say the number and then clap the correct number of claps. However, few children could manage beyond three or four on their own.

66 The numeracy strategy is used well, especially when whole class sessions are kept short and are followed by practical activities to reinforce the concepts learnt. For example, work on measuring heights was followed by practical work building towers taller than the one built by the teacher. Although teachers and support staff promote the use of correct mathematical language, and children understand terms such as taller and shorter, they are not able to use it readily without prompting.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

67 Although the teaching and provision is good, by the end of the reception year very few children reach the expectations for their age in knowledge and understanding of the world. In the nursery, children baking biscuits were helped to weigh out flour and sugar and given very good support from the teacher. They were encouraged to talk about what they were doing and

the changes that were taking place as they rubbed the fat into the flour. Despite this good teaching, the children only responded with nods or single words. However, they did know that the biscuits would be different when they came out of the oven.

68 Through the stimulus of a story and skilful questions by the teacher, children in the nursery remembered that a hamster had been brought into the nursery the previous week. They had learned that the hamster lived in a cage and had a wheel to play on. However, children's knowledge about animals is very limited for children of this age. In the reception class, children recalled the names of small creatures that they might see in gardens and knew that dropping and leaving litter about could harm them. Nevertheless, as children described animals, they included 'great big spiders with sharp teeth' and tigers. They did not have a real understanding of where different animals live but they showed that they were using their imagination and were concentrating on the teacher's questions. Children used scissors to cut paper sails for boats but needed help to decide what size and shape was required. They used glue carefully to make fixed joints and chose suitable materials for a mast. Children make a good start in learning computer skills. Although some children have problems in controlling the mouse, they know that when using the program "My World", if you double click on the mouse you can choose clothes and dress a teddy bear.

### **Physical development**

69 By the end of the reception year, children have made good progress in developing their physical skills but they are still not at a level that is expected for children of their age. The teaching is good and good opportunities and support are provided for children to develop skills in controlling their bodies. They are confident in moving around the nursery play area, and when using large wheeled toys outside they use the space well and share equipment happily. Many opportunities are provided for children to cut and fold paper, use crayons, pencils and paint brushes, to build with construction kits, to explore materials including sand and water and to fit jig-saws together. This helps to develop their manipulative skills well. Although children use scissors, their cutting is not accurate. While they learn to hold pencils with a correct grip they have limited skills in using them for writing, drawing and colouring.

### **Creative development**

70 Good opportunities to support all children's creative development are provided through both the nursery and reception classes and this area is taught well. However, because of children's lack of experiences before they come to school, they do not reach the standards that are expected by the time they leave the reception class. In the nursery, children experiment with brushes and paint but their paintings do not represent any recognisable shapes. By the time they reach the reception class, paintings of teddies show some detail of body parts and facial features. Teachers provide good opportunities for children to use their imagination in their play, for instance, when exploring in water play with bubbles and coloured water and when making models with different textures of modelling materials. For example, children made hedgehogs from both playdough and clay, thus experiencing the different effects that can be made with two different textures. Good adult support ensured that they could use both scissors and modelling tools to put in prickles, nose and eyes. Songs are a regular feature in both classes, often linked to other learning. For example, children in the nursery reinforced their knowledge about shape by singing, 'I can draw a big square' while in the reception class they sang, 'There's a worm at the bottom of my garden' after talking about garden creatures. Although children obviously enjoyed the songs, they needed a great deal of support and not all children joined in.

## **ENGLISH**

71 Results of national tests in 2000 showed attainment to be very low compared with the national average by the end of the infants, and well below by the end of the juniors. This well below national average performance reflects the very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and Statements of Special Educational Needs. The standards seen on inspection were better and, although not at the national average, are higher than in 2000 for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. Standards are better for pupils in the current Year 6 group of 13 pupils although most have special educational needs and one pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Need. In the infants, standards are rising in both reading and writing.

72 For many pupils in the infants, learning is affected by difficulties in concentration and remembering what they have been taught. Speaking and listening skills are below average despite the emphasis given to them by teachers. Many pupils are quiet in class and appear to be listening carefully to teachers but find it hard to transfer the ideas taught into their own answers. They reply in simple language and often single words to teachers' questions despite some probing and encouragement by teachers. They do not always listen well enough and often follow their own line of thinking rather than replying to the teacher's comments. Year 6 pupils give answers that are relevant to the questions, but these are usually simple and offer little explanation in support of a point of view. As a result of good questioning by the teacher, higher attaining pupils show serious thought in their answers and explain them well. For instance, in a mathematics lesson in Year 6, the teacher continually checked and challenged the meaning of "sort" and "mode" to gain explanations from the pupils. Pupils in Year 1 listen intently to stories and give simple answers to questions, for example, 'It's got animals in it'. In Year 2, they followed a bright and encouraging lesson closely and made observations about their work such as 'I know this', when grouping words that sound alike such as 'my', 'lie', and 'buy'.

73 The presentation of pupils' written work is poor for pupils in both the infants and the juniors. Handwriting skills develop slowly, and for many pupils at the end of the juniors handwriting is poorly formed with no consistent use of joined script. Teachers accept a simple script with very poor letter formation from lower attaining pupils. Some higher attaining pupils use a joined script but the skill is not developed progressively through the school to give pupils pride in their written work.

74 Pupils' skills in reading are below average. They learn to read satisfactorily and try hard to succeed but they build up their skills slowly. Many, in both the infants and the juniors, often have difficulty in understanding and explaining the meaning of what they read.

75 In Year 6, most pupils read accurately, but only the higher attaining pupils reach the standards expected for their age. They use expression well when reading aloud, enjoy books and have favourite writers. They talk about incidents in books and anticipate future events in stories using the characteristics of characters to know what reactions to expect as the plot develops. This standard is average for their age, but other pupils in Year 6 are below this level. They are hesitant in their reading and need to 'sound out' words frequently in order to identify what is written. All pupils speak of contents and index in reference books and have interests such as dinosaurs and football. Most pupils read simple text without expression and use sight-reading and memory of the words on the page to read basic words.

76 As a result of the emphasis the school puts on the teaching of writing, and good teaching, standards are improving in writing in both the infants and the juniors. In Year 6, higher attaining pupils are learning to use speech marks and some paragraphs in their imaginative writing. The teacher provides a good range of opportunities that include poetry and narrative accounts. Average attaining pupils use commas accurately and adverbs to make their writing more interesting. Lower attaining pupils produce simple work on past and present words, some simple speech and vocabulary exercises such as cook – cooking and box – boxes – boxer. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2, write simple sentences that consistently use capital letters and

full stops when writing or re-telling a story. They use speech marks in a simple way and standards are at the average level expected for their age. Average and lower attaining pupils are not reliable in the use of capital letters and full stops and are at a very basic level of attainment in writing.

77 Spelling is weak in both the infants and the juniors, with higher attaining pupils achieving average standards and other pupils not always secure on even simple words. Although word-work in literacy lessons had a focus on spelling, there was little evidence of a requirement for pupils to learn lists of suitable words and a collection of useful familiar words was not provided by teachers during writing tasks. The use of computer programs is used well to develop pupils' skills in spelling at the end of the infants but this is not consistent across all classes.

78 Teaching and learning is good overall in both the infants and the juniors, with some very good teaching for pupils with special educational needs. The good teaching was most evident in Years 2 and 6 and the very good teaching was with a small group of Year 2 pupils with special educational needs and Statements of Special Educational Need. Very good teaching showed a good knowledge of the pupils and what they could do. The lesson moved quickly and a variety of approaches were used to present the same ideas over and over again in order to consolidate pupils' learning. Relationships between pupils and teacher were very good, the pupils were confident in their teacher and worked hard. For instance, they took the parts of the characters in the story they were reading and enjoyed speaking clearly using glove puppets they were enthusiastic and keen to take a full part in the lesson. One pupil was heard to observe 'I like doing your work' and all pupils took an acting part in speaking the comments of the characters in a short story. Concentration was difficult for these pupils and the teacher used good, positive management methods to ensure their continued concentration as she developed pupils' skills in reading, speaking and listening and writing.

79 Good teaching of pupils in Years 2 and 6 was marked by a sense of purpose and an expectation that pupils would be able to meet the challenge of the work. Tasks were at a suitable level of difficulty and were varied to meet the learning needs of pupils at all levels of ability. For instance, pupils in Year 2 learned to spell words with the use of a cube. They successfully recognised the middle sounds in words such as, "cat," "pig", "hen" and "sleep". In Years 5 and 6, lessons moved forward with a sense of purpose, clear instructions were given and praise and encouragement were used well to ensure that pupils learned, for instance, the rules for plural endings such as in "babies" and "churches". Humour was frequently used sensitively for behaviour management of pupils who tried to interrupt lessons and to focus the attention of pupils whose concentration had wandered. Classroom support worked well for a pupil in Year 2 with a Statement of Special Educational Needs, when the learning assistant asked the pupil, 'How will you do this' and so caused the pupil to think for himself and to make progress with the task.

80 Where teaching was less effective, pupils' behaviour managed to slow down the process. Teachers used examples of how to structure a story and then asked pupils to transfer the ideas into a different setting. An opportunity was missed to work together as a class to develop a 'model' story sequence for all to use. As a result, pupils did not develop a collection of ideas and vocabulary on which to draw for their own work. Teachers did not teach the higher attaining pupils how to make their stories more interesting.

81 Teachers have very good ways of managing and communicating with challenging pupils and, as a result, pupils had a good attitude to learning. However, in some lessons, particularly in Year 5, behaviour was just satisfactory and some pupils attempted to disrupt lessons. Other pupils found it difficult to work together and teachers had to be very careful about how they grouped certain pupils together.

82 The management of the subject is satisfactory. The school uses the National Strategy for Literacy. Standards have improved since the last inspection and initiatives for the improvement of boys' reading in the infants, and the use of a Reading Recovery programme with a small number of pupils in the juniors, is having some success. The current focus is on improving writing. Reading resources have been closely graded according to vocabulary difficulty and provide better progression for pupils, especially those with special educational needs. Pupils are tested for progress in reading three times each year. Weekly curriculum staff meetings are used to review provision and to identify strategies for improving standards. The co-ordinator for the subject has been involved in the monitoring of standards in teaching and learning along with the literacy consultant.

## **MATHEMATICS**

83 Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school but by the time they leave, standards of pupils' attainments overall are below the standards achieved nationally. This is better than the results of the national tests in 2000 which were well below the national average for pupils at the age of 11. Standards are now higher than those achieved in the 1997 results of national end of Key Stage 2 tests, the year of the last inspection. Since then, there has been a steady improvement in line with the national trend, despite an increasing number of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs. Although pupils are assessed on a regular basis, the results of these assessments are not used to target particular areas of the curriculum to improve standards in mathematics. The analysis of national tests is used well to predict future levels of attainment. When pupils leave the reception class and start in the infants their attainment is well below that which is expected for children of this age. Despite steady progress through Years 1 and 2, they do not reach the expected national average of attainment by the time they are seven.

84 The results of the national tests indicate that there has been a steep rise in standards since a drop in 1997 following the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are very well supported in school and achieve standards that are in line with their abilities.

85 The teaching of mathematics is good overall. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject and teach the skills of mathematics well. However, in some lessons, insufficient use is made of the mental arithmetic sessions at the start of the lessons. In a few cases, this important part of the lesson is missed out altogether and in other lessons the pace is too slow to build up pupils' knowledge of number. This results in pupils having below average mental skills. Their knowledge of tables is weak and this affects their progress in all aspects of number.

86 In the best lessons, teachers focus clearly and precisely on what they want their pupils to learn. For example, in a lesson in the Year 5/6 class on data handling, the teacher very effectively used information collected about the class to teach the meaning of the statistical term 'mode'. By using the imaginative scenario of wanting to set up a shoe shop, pupils were well motivated and realised it would be important to know the most popular size of shoe to stock. The meaning of 'mode' therefore was continually reinforced during the lesson as pupils learned to work out 'modes' and handled several different sets of data. Teachers' expectations of behaviour are high and pupils are expected to work hard. However, a few pupils find working without supervision difficult and if no support is available their productivity is not high enough. For instance, in a lesson where the teacher was working with groups of pupils in turn on the computer, the rest of the pupils were working on their own, so that their rate of working was slower. In another lesson, when the teacher was able to check and support pupils' work they worked harder and completed the task set more quickly. Teachers care for their pupils and they handle their behaviour well so that relationships are positive and this helps pupils' learning.

87 As is the case with the older pupils, the lack of emphasis on mental arithmetic in the infant classes means those pupils' knowledge of number is not built up sufficiently quickly. Many pupils find it extremely difficult to retain what they have learnt and, therefore, it is essential that counting and mental recall of number facts are practised and reinforced on a daily basis. Opportunities to use mathematics incidentally are not always seized, for example, answering a simple addition before going outside to play or identifying odd and even numbers when lining up. The lack of learning skills and poor levels of concentration at the beginning of the infant stage is a challenge for teachers and slows down pupils' progress. Although they are supported well by well-deployed teaching assistants, many of the younger pupils find it difficult to work on their own. The over reliance on commercial worksheets too often means that pupils' attention is focused on filling in boxes on the sheet without fully understanding what they are recording. Too often, similar sheets are given to large groups of pupils so that those who have high prior attainment are insufficiently challenged. Most teachers focus their planning on clear learning objectives laid out in the National Numeracy Strategy and share these with the pupils at the beginning of the lesson. At the end of the lesson learning is reviewed in a number of ways including groups of pupils telling the rest of the class what they have learnt. This is effective in building pupils' self-esteem and reinforcing and sometimes extending learning.

88 As a successful introduction to a good lesson on two-dimensional shape in Year 2, the teacher used the results of pupils' homework to reinforce the properties of two-dimensional shapes. Without telling them the name, pupils had given instructions to someone at home on how to draw a shape. This focused their attention on the number of sides and corners. The teacher then consolidated knowledge of the properties of shapes already learnt by giving helpful hints such as, "a hexagon has six sides because both have an 'x' in. An octagon has eight sides because it is like 'octopus'". Pupils learnt that the mathematical name for corners are vertices and this language was reinforced continually during the lesson. Pupils were then challenged to investigate how many different shapes could be made from four squares if their sides must touch. Due to the clear directions given for the task and the support given by the teacher and teaching assistants, pupils were interested in the task and worked hard. A group of pupils satisfactorily used a computer programme to complete the same task.

89 The role of the co-ordinator has been little developed since the last inspection, and the co-ordinator still plays no part in monitoring standards of teaching and learning in the subject. Therefore, the effectiveness of the numeracy strategy has not been fully evaluated by the school.

## SCIENCE

90 Standards of pupils' attainment in science at Years 2 and 6 are not high enough although in the most recent teacher assessment (2001) at Year 2, there are signs that standards are improving. Results of pupils' performance in Year 6, in national tests have been consistently low over the last three years in comparison both with schools nationally and those with similar schools. This has been against the upward trend in results nationally. To a large extent, results reflect the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the school who have difficulty in applying their limited literacy skills to their work, for instance, when recording the results of their investigations. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily and make steady progress in their knowledge and understanding of science based on their previous attainment. However, the smaller proportion of higher attaining pupils do not make enough progress over their time in the school and do not all reach the national average or the higher levels expected of them. Boys outperform girls in science. The school has analysed this and is addressing the issue. The most recent results for pupils in Year 6 in 2001 are not as high as the previous two years and the school's results are likely to remain in the lowest 5 per cent of schools nationally. However, in this group of 19 pupils, 14 were at a very low level when they left the infants and there has been movement into and out of the school for seven of them since. Inspection findings show that standards of pupils' work are below the national average for pupils' ages at years 2 and 6. This is similar to the previous inspection but an improvement on the results in national tests.

91 Teaching of science is satisfactory overall. Pupils with special educational needs find it hard to remember what they have learnt over a longer length of time, although they have often done well by the end of a lesson as a result of good teaching. This affects their overall rate of progress, which is slow in lessons and over their time in the school. It means that teachers spend more time than in other schools at the beginning of lessons recapping what pupils have already learnt. However, teachers do not require pupils to do enough writing when recording their investigative work and to show their understanding of what they have learnt. They do not always provide higher attaining pupils with recording tasks of their scientific enquiries that are matched carefully enough to their abilities. For instance, although some higher attaining pupils in Year 2 are taught in a year group above their chronological age, they are capable of more challenging tasks than they are given and of work at a higher level than some of the older pupils with special educational needs. Higher attaining pupils in all classes are invariably given the same simple recording sheets as those for the less able pupils in the class. The use of assessment to plan and guide pupils' work and progress in science has been slow. Teachers are beginning to assess pupils according to the nationally recommended guidelines at the end of each unit of work. Although the school has been using these guidelines for some time, it is only just beginning to use this form of assessment. Teachers have not made good enough use of the assessment it previously had in place to plan and target work for pupils of higher levels of ability to ensure that they make the progress they should. The oldest pupils in Years 5 and 6 are not confident in taking the initiative and responsibility for their own work as a result of teachers directing work very carefully. This also hinders the progress of the higher attaining pupils. However, standards are improving particularly in Years 3 and 6. This is due to some good teaching in these year groups and the way in which teachers carefully plan scientific enquiries with an emphasis on what pupils are to learn, including the key scientific words that they are concentrating on. In these lessons teachers plan well. For instance, they anticipate any difficulties the pupils may have and they and the learning support assistants are ready to deal with them to help the pupils achieve.

92 In a good lesson in Year 2, pupils made good progress in their understanding of the senses of touch, sight, smell and sound. The teacher used the computer well to enable pupils to listen and identify recordings of sounds, some challenging, such as a hammer and a stapler. Pupils in Year 3 learn to recognise the need for a fair test in an investigation. With good support from their teachers and learning assistants, they make a prediction and measure out drops of

water accurately and record their results in a simple form when investigating which type of paper absorbs water the best. Pupils in Year 4 learn how bones in the human body move in a sequence to make a movement such as picking up an object. By the end of the juniors, pupils in Year 6 have gaps in their learning. Although they make good progress in their lessons and are taught well and have good attitudes and behave well, the skills of recording investigations in lessons are not developed well enough and ICT is used infrequently for developing pupils' understanding and skills in recording of science.

93 Management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has worked hard to review the curriculum, although she has not yet monitored the standards of pupils' work and teachers' planning or analysed the results of the standardised tests at seven and 11 to find where improvements are needed. Nationally recommended guidelines have been adapted well to match the curriculum planning in the school over a two-year cycle. An action plan is in place for the future development of science and its assessment which has a high priority in the school's development plan.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

94 Standards in art and design are appropriate for pupils at the ages of seven and 11. This is similar to standards at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils make good progress in their practical skills and understanding of the use of shape, materials and colour as they progress through the school. Although they begin in Year 1 with limited awareness of art and design, they achieve well and quickly develop appropriate knowledge and skills.

95 Teaching in art and design is good. Pupils enjoy their art and design lessons and the good opportunities they are given by teachers to develop their skills. As a result of good planning, organisation and preparation by teachers, lessons are smooth and purposeful. All pupils, including those who sometimes find it difficult to manage their behaviour, are fully involved with their activities. This results in them making good progress in their learning. For instance, in a good lesson, pupils in Years 2 and 3 worked purposefully and followed the teacher's clear instructions when investigating pattern with the use of a variety of printing techniques such as stippling and stencilling onto paper. They had previously printed onto fabric and experimented with monochrome. They were now confident in planning and developing their patterns with the use of different colours and shape. They understood the need for design and planning in their printing and that they could achieve a better effect with the use of a limited number of colours.

96 Pupils in both the infants and the juniors use a good range of media including paints, pastels, charcoal, fabrics, wool, papier mache, plaster and clay. The youngest pupils have opportunities to use computer programs, such as "My World" for producing pictures and make drawings and paintings of their friends. By the end of the juniors, they are skilled in observational drawings such as those of Victorian artefacts collected together for a study in history. Pupils carefully draw objects, such as flat irons and carpet beaters, which are on display in the classroom. They study the paintings of famous artists, such as Gustav Klimt and Mondrian, and draw and colour in their styles. Teachers use the resource of a digital camera well in exploring and exemplifying this area of work. Studying famous artists makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development, although little use is made of design and art from other cultures as a starting point for pupils' work. In a good lesson for pupils in Years 4 and 5, the classroom was a buzz of purposeful activity, with pupils working on several different activities to embellish child-sized thrones, which they had made in earlier lessons. Pupils worked carefully and with concentration on different activities such as making tassels, designing and painting plaster plaques made earlier, and transferring designs to salt dough. The teacher had organised pupils thoughtfully into groups and they were well supported by the teacher and learning assistant to enable good learning to take place for all pupils. A good emphasis was put on

pupils' personal and social development to help them work and learn co-operatively in a group situation with the outcome of a joint "throne". They were aware of how much progress they had made and at the end of the lesson completed a record of what the group had achieved and what was left still to do.

97 Teaching was consistently good in the three lessons observed. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons imaginatively. Lessons have included painting in response to the moods of different pieces of music such as Mozart's Requiem and the contrasting Flight of the Bumble Bee by Tchaikovsky, to help pupils develop different actions in their paintings.

98 The subject is led satisfactorily. The co-ordinator is new and enthusiastic and has good plans for the development of the subject in conjunction with the role of co-ordinating the new sports and arts developments taking place in the school. The school uses the nationally recommended guidelines in art and design and is beginning to develop assessment in conjunction with the units as they are taught. No monitoring of standards in art and design has been done although the co-ordinator is aware of the areas needed for development.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

99 At the time of the last inspection, provision for design and technology was inconsistent and the school's action plan spoke of looking closely at the programme of study and examining level descriptors. Standards were in line with expectations at the end of the infants, but below by the end of the juniors. Standards have improved and are now satisfactory for pupils at both the end of the infants and the juniors.

100 Design and technology lessons take place in alternate half terms. Although no lessons were seen during the inspection, teaching and learning is satisfactory as was evident from the range of activities and pupils' work on display in both the infants and the juniors. Pupils have successfully used large construction kits, needlework, card technology, mosaic work and box modelling. Other samples of pupils' work showed design of a photograph frame and rocking toys by infant pupils. This work is carefully structured and guided in its development, but there is also evidence of choice and decisions by pupils about decoration.

101 The co-ordinator has been in post since July of the last school year and the management of design and technology is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has plans for future development in the subject and gives advice to teachers about useful techniques. However, the co-ordinator is not given clear responsibility for developing the subject and for raising the standards of teaching and learning. No recent opportunities have been given for the monitoring of the provision and standards in the subject. The school has recently begun to use nationally recommended guidelines and staff are discussing how to make best use of this during the weekly curriculum staff meetings. The plans in place for the whole school include all the required areas of work, although no overview of the curriculum has been completed. Pupils' work is assessed at the end of each unit of work.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

102 History and geography are taught as alternate topics throughout the school. Consequently, at the time of the inspection history was being taught in the junior classes and geography in the infant classes.

103 At the time of the previous inspection the standards of pupils' work did not meet the expectation for pupils at the age of 11 in geography but were largely met in history. Standards have fallen in history and are below those expected for pupils at the end of Year 6. However,

there was insufficient evidence to make a firm judgement on the standards of pupils' attainment or the quality of teaching in geography at the end of Year 6.

104 At the time of the last inspection the standards of pupils' work did not meet the expectation for pupils at the age of seven in either history or geography. This is still the case for geography for pupils in Year 2 but there was insufficient evidence to make a firm judgement on the standards of pupils' attainment or the quality of teaching in history.

105 Pupils in the juniors enjoy their history lessons. Lessons are brought to life by the good use of visits to places such as the local museum. This helps pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning. In discussions with pupils in Year 6, they talked enthusiastically about their experiences in taking part in Victorian "role-play" at the museum during the inspection week. They showed that they had a good understanding of what it was like to live as part of a Victorian family. They knew that certain things had been invented during this time but could not suggest what effect these inventions had on the lives of people either at the time or on future generations. For instance, although they were able to make a few comparisons between the railways then and now, they could not imagine what impact the railways had at the time. The school uses ICT well in history. For instance, it has developed a website for pupils to access information about Florence Nightingale.

106 Good teaching is demonstrated by pupils' enthusiasm for the subject. An attractive display of Victorian artefacts in the Year 5/6 classroom provides the pupils with 'hands on experience' and they could explain what each were and how they were used.

107 Teaching of geography in the infant classes is satisfactory and appropriately based on a study of the local area and changes that are currently taking place in the area as a result of the local demolition programme. However, by the time pupils reach the age of seven their knowledge, skills and understanding do not reach the level that is expected for pupils of their age. Following a walk round the local area where streets are being demolished for redevelopment, the teacher successfully introduced the pupils to a time line. Pupils developed an understanding of what was happening. They learned how the events taking place were changing their own locality and how it was now compared with how it had been in the past. By using a photograph of the empty road labelled NOW, pupils were able to record the stages of people living, and then moving out of the houses, followed by houses being knocked down. Pupils learned how the area would be improved as new houses were to be built and new people would move in. A poignant point was made when a pupil said that her grandparents' house had been knocked down. However, as pupils in both age groups completed the same drawing task, opportunities were therefore lost for pupils to use their skills in writing. Pupils in the other infant class considered holiday destinations and matched clothing to take with different climates. The teacher made good use of the display and world map to reinforce work that had been covered in the previous few weeks, but pupils' answers were limited. They were only able to describe climate in terms of hot, sunny or cold.

108 The co-ordinator for history and geography is enthusiastic for both subjects but has only recently taken up the co-ordinator role for geography. Management of the subject is satisfactory in history, but it is too early to judge in geography. Units of work are planned on a two-year cycle and the school has adopted a scheme of work that builds on the development of pupils' skills in both subjects. As yet there has been no monitoring of either of the subjects by the co-ordinator and no assessment procedures are in place.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

109 There has been good improvement in the provision ICT since the last inspection. The school now has an ICT suite of computers that are connected to a central server unit and every

class base except one is connected to the server. Resources are significantly improved and teaching has also improved so that all teachers are confident in the use of the technology. This is in large part due to the good management of the subject by the co-ordinator who has attended courses on the use of devices, such as digital camera, scanners, the operation of a network and the use of the Internet. Courses are then run in school to 'pass on' the skills needed to make full use of these devices. A website has been developed by the co-ordinator on Florence Nightingale so that infant pupils can access information that is appropriate to their ability in their history lessons.

110 As a result, teachers of the infant pupils are making good use of the system. They prepare units of work on a central disc and allocate these to the files of individual pupils. This means that all pupils access work that teaches them skills in the use of the software. It also makes a sound contribution to developing pupils' language skills and the application of line and colour in art and design. This teaching is good and shows confident use of ICT to develop the skills of pupils and to use them to support their learning in most subject areas.

111 Satisfactory teaching of junior pupils is based around the use of a tutor attached to the Cumbria Credits Suite who also tutors classes for adults in the community. Teachers of junior pupils use computer skills well in support of learning in other subject areas. For example, pupils in Year 6 were learning about plurals in an English lesson by correcting a text that the teacher had previously prepared on the central server unit. However, there was little evidence of pupils using the word processor for extended writing direct into the computer. The use of ICT to support learning in some other subject areas such as mathematics and science is not so well developed in the junior classes. The tutor is very organised in the training that she gives. Pupils in Year 3 applied their previous learning well as they started computers and found their own files. They then developed keyboard skills as they typed in simple sentences and later, with support, searched a graphics file for suitable illustrations to insert in their writing. They wrote directly onto the computer and showed satisfactory keyboard skills in word processing for their age. The tutor then showed pupils how to move and change the size of their illustration so that it fitted their writing well.

112 Standards in ICT are in line with expectations for pupils by the end of Years 2 and 6. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards for infant pupils were below those expected nationally. It was not possible to see the full range of skills development during inspection, but evidence from other sources showed a broad range of development. Pupils have designed cards, researched the Internet, imported pictures to illustrate writing and illustrated data about favourite foods and frequency of letters in names with block graphs. They have also written newspaper reports and developed poems. Software used gives experience in word processing, graphics, publishing, research and spreadsheets. Infant pupils use a programmable toy to develop ideas about control technology but there is some weakness in the provision for junior pupils. Although the minimum requirements of control can be taught, there are no resources for the use of sensors to record information, for example, about weather temperatures, or rates of heartbeat during individual reactions to exercise. These resources would develop the range of opportunity for using ICT in support of learning in science and geography. ICT is used appropriately to support learning in areas of the curriculum such as English, mathematics and art and design. A very good selection of pictures in the style of Mondrian is displayed in the Year 1/2 classroom.

## **MUSIC**

113 Music does not have a high enough profile in the school and opportunities are missed to develop pupils' skills of language and listening through the subject. At the last inspection, standards in music were below expectations for the infants and roughly at the national average by the end of the juniors. The co-ordinator is new to the post and has had training to develop

music through the school. However, staff expertise and confidence in music is limited, but this is not yet a priority in the current school development plan.

114 There were insufficient music lessons seen to make firm judgements on the quality of teaching and standards of pupils' attainment in music. The co-ordinator teaches music for the infants as a whole group and pupils learn to develop rhythms for accompaniments to their singing. In the infants and the juniors, pupils have some opportunities to listen to well known music during snack time and in some art and design lessons, but few opportunities are given for pupils to talk about the music they listen to. Pupils' singing is enthusiastic in assemblies and pupils enjoy these opportunities. They join in with actions and rhythm patterns, clapping in time and singing in tune to recorded accompaniments. They know many choruses and songs from memory. At Christmas, all pupils in the school perform and take part in concerts and musical plays for parents and visitors.

115 The co-ordination of music is not satisfactory. Staff are beginning to use and trial activities from the newly recommended guidelines. Visitors have provided successful musical opportunities for pupils in the past as part of the inclusion project the school has had with a local school for pupils with special educational needs. The subject is not developed enough and there are no firm plans in place to do so, although the school is hopeful that more opportunities will be provided for pupils in the future with the opening of the new sports and arts hall.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

116 Standards of attainment and the quality of teaching are satisfactory in both the infants and the juniors. Physical education has been managed satisfactorily in the past and is now co-ordinated by the head teacher. Action is being taken to develop provision through involvement in a dance festival project. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.

117 Teaching was good in both lessons seen during the inspection. Pupils in Year 6 worked with a specialist dance tutor as they developed a routine with a theme based on the "Harry Potter" books. Good, exciting teaching resulted in the pupils achieving well and developing good, dramatic sequences of movements that involved individual expression and co-ordinated group sequences. Pupils enjoyed their work and, with sensitive prompting from the teacher, made sound observations and evaluations on how to improve their movements. With practise, they succeeded in refining their movements which included crisp, meaningful gestures. The whole area of the hall was used well for twisting and turning movements. Pupils used expressive gestures of body and face to represent witches, spells and a power struggle in magical terms. The pupils repeated, changed and improved the sequences as they worked hard at achieving a complete effect.

118 Pupils in Year 2 move with confidence as they use hands and feet in a gymnastics lesson to support their weight whilst moving around the room. They responded quickly to clear directions from the teacher who used humour well and increased the challenge in the activities through the lesson. Pupils achieved well. They gained in confidence and used their imagination well as they practised hops, rolls and jumps. Good contributions to pupils' learning were made by the teacher and learning assistant who worked well together, encouraging pupils and ensuring that pupils practised their movements and broadened the range of their skills.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

119 Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed guidelines for pupils in Years 2 and 6. This is similar to the last inspection. Year 6 pupils write sound accounts in their recording of the story of Jesus' teachings and the good example he sets towards Zaccheus the tax collector.

120 As a result of good teaching and communication of ideas to pupils, they learn and achieve well in lessons in both the infants and the juniors, although many find it hard to write about what they have learned. Teachers make good efforts to help pupils in their understanding of religious education by using a variety of ways to explain and illustrate the learning points in lessons. For instance, in a lesson for lower attaining pupils in Year 1, the teacher used a small stuffed toy and plastic can rings effectively to help pupils understand the dangers that could be caused for small creatures by humans through carelessness. Pupils learnt the need to take their responsibilities seriously for caring for animals and the world around them. They succeeded in recording what they had learnt by illustrating a poster and were able to make a simple presentation to other pupils at the end of the lesson. By the end of the lesson, based on their previous attainment, all pupils had achieved well and made good progress. They knew the reasons and the need to put rubbish “in the bin” and to help to look after wild creatures and were able to tell this to the rest of the class.

121 Imaginative teaching for pupils in Years 1 and 2 resulted in them responding well to a recording made by the teacher of leaves rustling and birds singing. Together with the use of a well-chosen story, it helped them to understand the Jewish celebration of Tu B'Shevat and the importance in the Jewish belief of caring for the environment and the practise of planting trees. The teacher's good subject knowledge of the practices and beliefs of the Jewish faith were well communicated to the pupils and good management and organisation in the lesson meant that pupils made very good strides in their understanding.

122 Teaching in religious education is also good in the juniors, although sometimes written work is not matched carefully enough to the levels of ability for the higher attaining pupils. Pupils learn about Christian festivals, such as harvest, through first hand experiences at the time of the school's own harvest celebration. In discussions, pupils in Year 3 showed their achievement well by explaining sensibly why Christians celebrate the harvest. They know that it is a time for Christians to thank God for food. Older pupils develop a good understanding of the life and work of Jesus and are keen to share what they know and have learned. They explained that “Jesus was a teacher who cared for people and when he was twelve years old he travelled a long way to the temple and talked to the grown-ups”. In a good lesson, pupils in Year 5 were able to understand the meaning of the parable of The Good Samaritan from the Bible and extended their thoughts to their own feelings and the need to be aware of the feelings of others. The teacher developed pupils' vocabulary well in the lesson so that by the end, pupils had explored the meaning of being “sad and lonely” and “grateful and relieved”. Teachers and learning assistants help pupils with English as an additional language and with Statements of Special Educational Needs well in religious education lessons.

123 Management of the subject is good. Although the co-ordinator is new to the post this year, it has been managed well in the past. The co-ordinator is making a good start in developing the subject further. Religious education features in the current school development plan. A review of the latest curriculum guidance on religious education and how it can be best used, together with the locally agreed syllabus and the planned programme for personal and social education support is to be undertaken this term. Additional staff training and the involvement of advisory staff to support the review of the present scheme of work have been arranged. Resources are in need of supplementing to match the chosen multi-faith areas of the syllabus.